Headlines

Gay marriage ban out again

House defeats same-sex amendment

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON • The Republican-controlled House defeated a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage Thursday, the latest in a string of conservative causes pushed to a vote by GOP leaders as Election Day draws near.

The vote was 227-186, far short of the two-thirds needed for approval of a measure that President Bush backed but the Senate previously rejected.

"God created Adam and Eve. He didn't create Adam and Steve," said Rep. Roscoe Bartlett, R-Md., on behalf of a measure that supporters said was designed to protect an institution as old as civilization itself.

Rep. Steny Hoyer of Maryland, the Democratic whip, accused GOP leaders of "raw political cynicism" and said they hoped to "create the fodder for a demagogic political ad."

Whatever the motivation, there was no disagreement that the amendment lacked the two-thirds majority needed to pass, just as it failed by a lopsided ratio in the Senate earlier this year.

WAIT TILL NEXT YEAR: Highway, welfare bills shelved. **Page 12**

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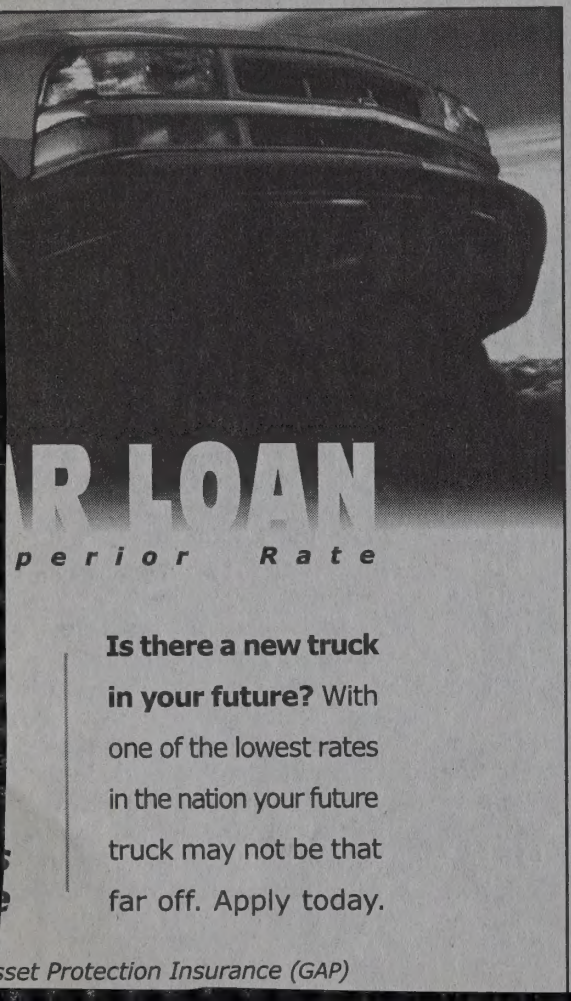
The debate on the amendment to ban gay marriage came a day after the House voted 250-171 to overturn a 28-year municipal ban on handgun ownership in the District of Columbia. Last week, Republicans forced a vote on legislation to protect the words "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Even among majority Republicans, the issue generated dissent.

Majority Leader Tom DeLay, R-Texas, was the principal speaker on behalf of the measure, taking a role that is almost always reserved for the chairman of the committee with jurisdiction. In this case, though, the leadership bypassed the Judiciary Committee, and GOP officials said the panel's chairman, Rep. James Sensenbrenner, R-Wis., made clear that he wanted no part of the debate. His spokesman didn't return a call on why he took that position.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NATION

Teams hunt radiation, bomb

Device was lost in '58 off Georgia

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LITTLE TYBEE ISLAND, Ga. • Experts dragged sensors from boats and divers scooped soil from the ocean bottom Thursday, looking for radioactive clues to the location of a hydrogen bomb lost off Georgia in 1958.

A crippled B-47 bomber dumped the 7,600-pound H-bomb into the Wassaw Sound near Savannah after the plane collided with a fighter jet during a training flight. At the time, the military searched for 10 weeks and finally pronounced the bomb irretrievable.

A team of 20 experts in nuclear weapons and radiation detection from the Air Force, Navy and Energy Department began searching Wednesday after a Navy submarine detected higher-than-normal radiation levels near the island.

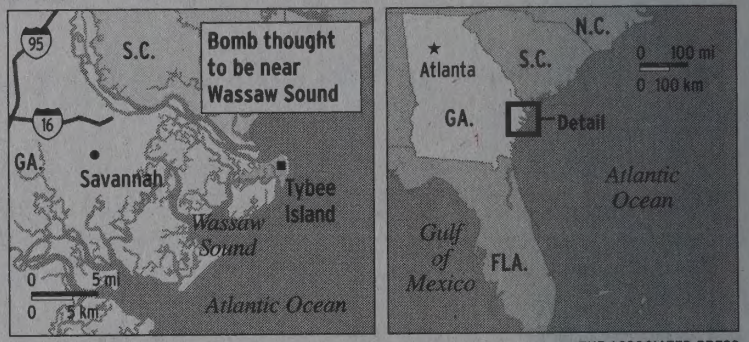
"Our goal is to have a definitive report on claims of radiation in this area — is it there and what it is." said Billy Mullins, an Air Force nuclear weapons adviser leading the government team.

The Air Force said the bomb is incapable of a nuclear explosion because it lacks the plutonium capsule needed to trigger an atomic blast. Still, it contains about 400 pounds of

expected back for several weeks.

Missing bomb

Unusual radiation readings have led the U.S. government to send a team of 20 scientists to try to find a hydrogen bomb lost off the coast of Georgia in 1958.



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